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17 November 2005

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Iran: Documentation required and procedures to be followed by a parent wishing to travel abroad with a minor child in the absence, or without the consent, of the second parent (January 2003 - November 2005)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

In 10 and 16 November 2005 telephone interviews with the Research Directorate, the first counsellor of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Ottawa provided the following information:

A minor child can leave Iran only with the consent of his or her father. A mother cannot bring a child out of the country without the consent of her husband. If the father decides to bring the child out of the country, no further consent is required. The father's consent must be provided at the time the child obtains a passport. In order to obtain a child's passport, the father must apply in person, in which case he can grant permission to his wife to take the child out of the country. The child's passport is stamped to indicate the valid period (often five years) in which the mother can take her child out of the country. There are generally no further steps required, even at the airport, for a mother to take her child out of the country. However, the father can decide to cancel the validity of the passport stamp at any time, thereby forbidding the mother to leave Iran with her minor child. The counsellor could not provide further details on the procedure that must be followed by a father who wishes to cancel the validity of the passport stamp.

The Consular Information Sheet of the United States Department of State corroborates the fact that minor children (under 18) of Iranian citizens require their father's permission to leave Iran, "even if the mother has been granted full custody by an Iranian court," and adds that since non-Iranian women who marry Iranian nationals must convert to Islam and acquire Iranian citizenship, they too require their husband's permission to depart the country (United States 25 Aug. 2005).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Iran. 16 November 2005. Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Ottawa. Telephone interview with the first counsellor.

_____. 10 November 2005. Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Ottawa. Telephone interview with the first counsellor.

United States. 25 August 2005. Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs. "Consular Information Sheet: Iran." <http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1142.html> [Accessed 28 Sept. 2005]

Additional Sources Consulted

Publications: Passport and Visa Expeditors.

Internet Sites, including: Embassy of Canada in Tehran; Embassy of Iran in London; Embassy of Iran in Ottawa; Embassy of Pakistan in Washington, DC (Interests Section of Iran); Foreign Affairs Canada (*Travel Report*); Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Refworld 2004; United States Reciprocity Schedule.

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